

Application No. 09/344,826
Amendment dated May 4, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated March 4, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 2, 4-10, 12-18, 20-25, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, and 42 have been amended. Claims 31, 37, and 43 have been canceled. Claims 44-67 have been withdrawn. Claims 2-30, 32-36, and 38-42 are currently pending in the application.

The Examiner rejected claims 2-3, 5, 7-11, 13, 15-19, 21, and 23-43 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Judice (USPN 3,937,878). The Examiner objected to claims 4, 6, 12, 14, 20, and 22. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application.

Applicant has written dependent claims 31, 37, and 43 into independent claims 2, 10, and 18, respectively. Applicant has amended the independent claims to more clearly define the invention and to present the claims in better form for consideration on appeal.

Unlike Applicant's claimed invention, Judice uses only one spatial halftone technique with the same halftone parameters to halftone an image. In particular, Judice utilizes a single dither matrix (the halftone technique) containing dither threshold values (the halftone parameters) (see col. 2, lines 56-65 and col. 3, lines 16-25). Every pixel in the image is assigned a corresponding dither threshold value from the dither matrix, and that same dither threshold value is used whenever its corresponding pixel is halftoned. Thus, the same dither threshold value is used when the pixel is first halftoned and then again during any subsequent "conditional replenishment" halftoning (see col. 2, line 60 to col. 3, line 2; col. 3, line 63 to col. 4, line 8; and col. 4, line 42 to col. 5, line 8)). Judice does not teach or disclose using one of two or more spatial halftone techniques to halftone the image, where each spatial halftone technique has at least one halftone parameter that differs from the halftone parameters in the other spatial halftone techniques.

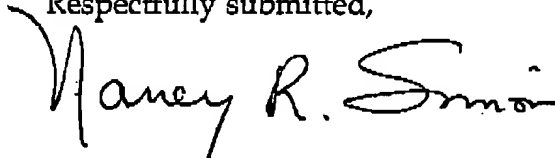
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"Claims in dependent form shall be construed to incorporate by reference all the limitations of the claim incorporated by reference into the dependent claim." 37 CFR 1.75. Therefore, claims 3-9 and 26-30 include all the limitations of claims 2, claims 11-17 and 32-36 include all of the limitations of claim 10, and claims 19-25 and 38-42 include all the limitations of claim 18. For at least the reasons discussed above, Judice does not anticipate independent claims 2, 10, and 18. Accordingly, dependent claims 2-9, 11-17, 19-30, 32-36, and 38-42 are also not anticipated by Judice.

In light of the discussion above, Applicant believes that all claims currently remaining in the application are allowable and respectfully requests allowance of such claims.

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Respectfully submitted,



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